

Hide, He's Coming: Why is the World So Messed Up?

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Lesson Five

Lesson Objective: That students understand the results of the Fall, and commit themselves to resist sin and be agents of blessing in the world.

Bible Passage: Genesis 3: 6-24

Bible Truth: Adam and Eve's sin caused a barrier between them, and all their descendents, and God and brought suffering and death into the world.

Before You Begin:

- ◆ a deck of cards
- ◆ a large coin
- ◆ story "Pandora's Box--The Second Millennium"
- ◆ Bibles
- ◆ handouts "Understanding the Headlines"
- ◆ pencils
- ◆ a smelly shoe or sock
- ◆ a fragrant rose

Opening:

Divide into groups of about 5 and give to each group half a deck of cards. Tell them they have three minutes to build a tower of cards as high as they can. After they have finished walk around looking at the towers. Complement their work and announce which tower is the highest. Go the winning tower, say that you just want to add a final decoration, and place (or drop) on top a large coin. The tower should collapse under the weight of the coin. Then ask:

- *How did you feel when I dropped the coin on your tower and why?*
- *How do you think God felt when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden?*

- ***What similarity do you see between dropping the coin on the card tower and Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit? [With one wrong action, the whole thing is ruined.]***
- ***Sometimes when we think about Adam and Eve's sin we think that we would have been able to do things differently if given the chance. After all who believes what a talking snake says? Before we look at the results of their sin, let me read you a story.***

Interactive Learning

Ask the students to close their eyes and imagine themselves in the following situation. Then read story "Pandora's Box--The Second Millennium" (Found at the end of this lesson.) Ask:

- ***Do you think you would have opened the box? Why or why not?***
- ***Tell about a time when you were a child that you did something you knew was wrong. [If you have limited time, get examples from several students; if you have more time, have everyone in the group share]***

At first glance, it doesn't seem fair that all of mankind suffers the effects of Adam and Eve's sin. We want the chance to "make our own destiny." But our lives and history show that none of us would have done any differently.

Bible Application

As a group read out loud Genesis 3: 1-13 then divide the group in half and call one group the prosecution and the other the defense. The defense will consist of Adam, Eve, and the Serpent and their legal team. The prosecution will consist of a judge, a prosecuting attorney and a jury. Give the students several minutes to prepare their cases based on Genesis 3:6-24. Have the prosecution present its case, followed by the defense, and finish with the jury proclaiming the verdict and judge pronouncing the sentence. Thank them for their participation and ask:

- ***What was the first clue that Adam and Eve knew they had done something wrong (v.7)? [They made coverings for themselves.]***
- ***What was the second clue (v.8)? [They hid themselves from God.]***

In these actions we see the first effect of their sin, which was alienation, a breakdown of the intimacy they used to have, both with each other and with God. If you have ever experienced the loneliness and sadness of

losing the intimacy in a relationship that means a lot to, you know that this is very painful.

- ***What did God do to Adam and Eve which shows that their relationship with God was broken (v.23, 24)? [He threw them out of the garden.]***

Not only did God throw Adam and Eve out of the garden, but all of their descendents--that means you and me-- were also forced to live their lives outside the garden and in a state of broken intimacy with God. This passing on of their rebellious nature and their state of separation from God is called "original sin."

- ***Besides the shared punishment of being thrown out of the garden, God specifically punished each guilty person. What punishments did God give Eve and her descendents (v.16)? [Pain in childbirth, desire to usurp her husbands authority.]***
- ***How did God punish Adam and his descendents (v.17-19)? [Work and providing food becomes more difficult and unpleasant, will die and their bodies will return to the dust of the ground.]***
- ***What punishment did God give to the serpent (v.14, 15)? [Has to crawl on it's belly, Satan will eventually be defeated by one of Eve's descendents.]***
- ***Do you think these punishments are fair? Why or why not?***

We see that Adam and Eve's sin brought not only separation from God but also caused suffering and death to enter the world. This change from a state of blessing, happiness and harmony to the state of being cursed and of discord, suffering, and death is called "the fall." We see that the fall doesn't just affect people, but it affects the whole earth and everything in it. Let's look a little closer at how the fall and original sin affect our lives today.

Commitment

Give students a copy of the handout "Understanding the Headlines" (at the end of this lesson) and read through the instructions out loud. Allow several minutes for the students to fill out the handout. When you see that most students have finished, review the answers together.

Leader's guide to answers:

hurricane-fall; born blind-fall; attraction-original sin; shooting-personal sin; kidnapping-personal sin; "no"-original sin; train wreck-fall.

What can we do about suffering caused by living in a fallen world?
[Help alleviate their pain in whatever way we can whether physically with their needs, emotionally and spiritually with giving them hope and encouragement, and of course praying for them. Make sure they get specific with something they can do this week.]

What can we do about original sin in our lives? [Fight against temptation and our fleshly desires, knowing what God wants us to do and asking him to give us the strength to do it.]

What can we do about personal sin in our lives? [Like with original sin, fight against it, but when we sin, repent and ask forgiveness.]

Closing

Ask the students to close their eyes. Then walk around the room, passing in front of their noses the following: a smelly shoe or sock, a fragrant rose. Ask them what they smelled. Then explain:

The Bible says that just like this shoe and this flower, we give off an aroma. We smell. Every single day we have the choice of "smelling" like Jesus or not. We can be part of the disharmony and suffering in the world by being selfish and sinning, or we can be an agent of God bringing a little harmony and blessing to the world. What do you want to smell like?

Close with a prayer asking God to help the students in the specific areas they wrote down to resist sin in their own lives and be agents of his blessing in the world.

Pandora's Box--The Second Millennium

One afternoon you go out to get the mail and find there an invitation to a very special event being held by your boss. You had heard rumors that she was inviting the heads of all of the departments to a special week at a beautiful resort in the mountains and that a few employees would be rewarded for their good work with an invitation. You're so excited that you spend the next week counting down the days until you can go.

When you arrive, the resort is even more beautiful than you had imagined. You can't believe that you get to spend an entire week in this fresh air and among the lovely pine trees and magnificent rock formations. The first evening, as you dress for the opening banquet, a note is slipped under the door to your room. It says that because of an unexpected emergency the host and hostess will be unable to attend the banquet, but they request that the guests carry on without them and enjoy the feast they have prepared in their honor. At the bottom you see a small note that reads: "Near the front door there is a box on the floor. We ask that you please refrain from opening it. The contents may be hazardous to your health." Of course this makes you wonder what could possibly be in the box and why they mentioned it in the note.

At the banquet you notice to your pleasure that several of the other guests are friends of yours. As you talk with them you notice the delightful array of food laid on the table. Great food, good company, the promise of a wonderful week ahead, what more could you want? But one thing keeps nagging at the back of your mind, "What on earth could be in that box?" The banquet gets underway. The food is even better than it looks. You are pleased to realize that some of the people at your table are quite nice, even if they are in company management. As everyone talks you wonder, "What dangerous thing would they have in the house? Why would it be in a box where anyone can open it?"

Halfway through the evening you decide to go to the bathroom, and find yourself not too far from the front door. Your curiosity overcomes you and you decide to look down the hall and see how big the box is. You can't see it. So you look around and, seeing no one in sight, walk towards the door.

"Oh, that must be it. Why, it's even smaller than a shoebox. What could be so dangerous and be in just a small box."

Actually in the back of your mind you know that plenty of small things are dangerous, but you don't want to think about that right now. Almost before you know it, you've lifted the lid. You quickly drop the lid back on. Inside was a dead rat. You quickly return to the banquet, but the evening has been spoiled because you keep seeing the rat in your mind. It had obviously been caught in a trap because its body had burst open and its guts were coming out. The thought of it ruined the rest of dinner for you. You couldn't even eat desert because the strawberries reminded you of the rat entrails. Once in your room, you look anxiously around for signs of other rats and then, feeling dissatisfied, go to sleep.

But the worst was yet to come. The next morning at breakfast the hostess made an announcement: "Our video surveillance recorded that a

dangerous virus has contaminated some of our guests. This happened when they handled a box containing a rat that was a carrier of this virus. Any of you who have become contaminated please report to the physician in the infirmary so you may be treated before you become gravely ill. We regret to inform you that treatment of the virus will require spending the week quarantined in the infirmary."

Understanding the Headlines

As we have seen all suffering and death and separation from God are a result of man's sin and are called "the Fall." But even though all suffering and pain share this common root, it is possible to distinguish between suffering that results from living in a fallen world, suffering that comes from a personal decision to sin, and the tendency towards sin that is called Original Sin. Beside each headline write the cause of the event: "A Fallen World"; "Original Sin"; or "Personal Sin." Then answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

HURRICANE ADAM STRIKES PACIFIC COAST: 100 BELIEVED DEAD

SON OF FAMOUS SINGER BORN BLIND

STUDY SHOWS 90% OF MARRIED PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE WHO IS NOT THEIR SPOUSE

MAN KILLS HIMSELF AFTER SHOOTING HIS GIRLFRIEND

TWO SUSPECTS JAILED IN JUDGE'S KIDNAPPING

MOTHER'S AGREE: MOST COMMON WORD USED IN A YOUNG CHILD'S VOCABULARY IS "NO!"

30 WOUNDED IN FREAK TRAIN WRECK

1. What can we do about suffering caused by living in a fallen world?
(Think generally, but then write down something specific you could do, like write a note to a lonely relative, visit a nursing home, etc.)
2. What can we do about original sin in our lives?
3. What can we do about personal sin in our lives? (Think generally, but then write something specific, like "forgive that person I hate," or "be more respectful to my parents.")